

Washington, DC — Today Congressman Joe Sestak (D-PA) voted for the Labor, Health and Human Services (HHS) and Education Appropriations Bill, H.R. 3083., which included several measures that Congressman Sestak secured to improve our region's education, economy, and healthcare. — "Education, health and economic security have always been important parts of my plan for how I will work in Congress. This bill includes key provisions that will help the district and the country," said the Congressman, "It is easy to overlook the important role investments in training and education make but ensuring that we have a strong workforce is one cornerstone of creating a better economy for the country."

Congressman Sestak secured \$150,000 from the Department of Labor's budget for the Community Partnership for Job Readiness Program, administered by the Foundation of the Delaware County Chamber, to facilitate economic growth in Delaware County. Specifically, this program will provide workforce development services in the municipalities of Trainer, Marcus Hook and Upper Darby and will work to prepare residents to meet the employment needs of area businesses and industries in the near future. It will identify the needs for and coordinate the delivery of technical training for residents from these municipalities and offer a comprehensive system identifying the skills needed by employers, the availability of training opportunities for those skills, and the development of a community infrastructure to effectively communicate and provide those services residents.

Congressman Sestak was also successful in securing \$150,000 for Delaware County Community College (DCCC) to consolidate and upgrade their science, engineering, and technology facilities into a single building. The facilities that currently support the basic sciences, engineering and technical programs are obsolete and housed on different campuses, creating inefficiencies and duplication of effort. By consolidating and upgrading these facilities into one cutting-edge complex, DCCC will become a magnet for the study of science, engineering, and technology and attract more students to programs that serve the region's most essential industries. The complex will include a 100,000 square foot four-story building for modern science laboratories that permits a variety of instructional modalities. The new instructional environment will facilitate the creation of learning-focused communities that foster cross-discipline activities and student-faculty interaction. Within these learning communities, students also will gain hands-on experience in practicing scientific, technical, and cooperative skills required of the 21st century workforce. This funding is in addition to the \$231,000 that Congressman Sestak secured in the Financial Services Appropriations Bill, passed earlier this summer, for the establishment of Delaware County Community College's Small Business Center.

Also, Congressman Sestak successfully fought to get \$150,000 for Widener University's Early

Childhood Engagement Project, which will be used to improve access to and quality of programs that service 3-4 year old children. Specifically, it create a strategic plan in which universities work towards a collaborative partnership through the establishment of a rigorous plan for delivering a critical level of public and private resources that will ensure children in the Chester community are ready to learn when they enter school. Through this program, Widener University will partner with the Chester Upland School District.

“These programs do a lot to ensure our students receive the best education possible and prepare them for an ever changing workplace where they will have to compete with other candidates from across the globe,” added the Congressman “The three provisions that address education do so at varying levels from childhood to college and will provide district students with a solid background from which they can succeed.”

Additionally, the Congressman obtained \$300,000 for the Crozer-Chester Medical Center, adjacent to the City of Chester, to build a regional burn treatment center to replace the existing National Speare Regional Burn Treatment Center, which was build in 1973. The existing burn center is the largest burn center in the region, caring for more burn patients than any other burn center in the Northeast Corridor. This project will more than double the size of the existing burn center. The number of dedicated beds would increase from 13 to 20, with a demonstrated surge capacity of an additional 20 beds in the event of a large-scale emergency, and an expansion in the total surge capacity for burn care from 63 beds to 90 beds, including on-unit and off-unit capacity. This is expected to result in significant benefits to the region, including increasing in regional capacity to care for burn patients, improving patient outcomes, due to reduced hospital-acquired infections, increasing patient satisfaction, and increased bioterrorism preparedness and ability to respond to large-scale mass casualty events.

“Improving healthcare for all Americans remains a top priority for me and that is why I fought so hard to include funding for the Crozer-Chester Medical Center’s burn unit. The provision included in this legislation will allow them to finally rebuild this important part of their complex – the burn treatment center,” said the Congressman, “I recently visited this facility and saw first-hand the good work they do there. This center treats more burn victims than any other in the Northeast U.S. and needs to be renovated so that they can be more effective.”

H.R. 3043 also strengthens programs benefiting children and families by increasing our investment in health care and education. Specifically, the bill:

Makes college more affordable and accessible. Overall, the President proposes cutting student financial aid by \$1.2 billion below 2007. The bill rejects this cut and instead provides an increase of \$2 billion over 2007 and \$3.2 billion over the President. The bill increases the maximum Pell Grant by \$390, which is on top of an increase of \$260 the Democratic-led Congress enacted in February. Hence, in two years, the maximum Pell Grant is being raised from \$4,050 to \$4,700, benefiting more than 5.5 million low- and middle-income students. The President proposes eliminating Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (SEOGs) – but the bill rejects this elimination and provides \$771 million, the same as 2007, helping one million students with extremely low incomes attend college. The bill provides an increase of 6.6 percent over 2007 for GEAR-UP, enabling 785,000 middle-school students to participate in 2008, receiving skills and resources to pursue college. In addition, it provides an increase of 4.8 percent over 2007 for the TRIO programs, which expand access and college completion for low-income students, allowing 850,000 students to participate in 2008.

Helps raise the achievement levels of America's students. The Democratic-led Congress is determined to help raise the academic performance of America's students. The bill provides an increase of \$2 billion over 2007 and \$1 billion over the President's request for No Child Left Behind programs. This includes an increase of \$1.9 billion over 2007 for Title I, the largest increase in the history of Title I – giving an additional 161,000 low-income children extra help with reading and math. This also includes providing an increase of \$300 million over 2007 and \$400 million over the President's request for grants for improving teacher quality; rejecting the President's proposal to eliminate education technology grants, instead providing \$272 million, the same as 2007; and providing an increase of \$125 million over 2007 and the President's request for after-school programs, providing after-school opportunities for an additional 163,000 students.

Invests in education for children with disabilities. The President's budget proposes cutting IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) state grants by \$291 million below 2007. The bill rejects this cut and instead provides an increase of \$509 million over 2007 and \$800 million over the President. This investment reverses a two-year decline in the federal contribution toward the rising costs of special education for 6.9 million children with disabilities. Under the Republicans, the federal contribution for special education fell from 18.6 percent in 2005 to 17.2 percent in 2007, leaving states struggling to meet these costs.

Expands access to health care for the uninsured. It is a disgrace that there are 46.6 million Americans without health insurance. This bill takes some steps to address this national problem -- funding several initiatives that would provide access to health care for more than 2 million uninsured Americans. For example, the bill provides \$200 million or 10 percent more than 2007 and the President's request for community health centers – enabling these centers to serve an additional 1 million uninsured Americans. The bill provides \$75 million for a new initiative of state health access grants – providing start-up grants to states that are ready with plans to expand health care coverage to targeted groups. It also includes \$50 million for an

initiative to assist states in providing high-risk insurance pools to support affordable insurance for almost 200,000 people who are medically high-risk.

Expands life-saving medical research. Medical research at NIH offers hope to millions of American families – with groundbreaking research into diseases such as cancer, diabetes, Alzheimer’s, and Parkinson’s. And yet the GOP-led Congress has been shortchanging NIH for years. Between 2003 and 2006, the number of new and competing research grants that NIH could support actually dropped by 1,282 – a drop of 12 percent. For FY 2008, the President proposed a cut of \$279 million below 2007. Instead, this bill provides an increase of \$750 million over 2007 and \$1 billion over the President – allowing NIH to support another 545 new and competing research grants over the 2007 level. The increase of \$750 million is on top of the FY 2007 increase of \$620 million the Democratic-led Congress provided in February.

Invests in the skills of America’s workers. The President’s budget proposes slashing vital employment and training programs by \$1.4 billion – leaving Americans who want to succeed in the 21st century workforce without vital services they need. The bill rejects this damaging cut and instead provides an increase of \$148 million over 2007 and \$1.5 billion over the President’s request. For example, the bill rejects the President’s proposal to cut Job Corps, a successful program to provide intensive training and job placement help for at-risk youth, by \$56 million, which would have resulted in cutting 4,310 student training slots. Instead, the bill provides an increase of \$43 million over 2007 for Job Corps. The bill also rejects the President’s proposal to cut dislocated worker training by \$357 million, instead providing the 2007 level of funding of \$1.5 billion.

Invests in community services. The President’s budget proposes eliminating the vital \$630 million Community Services Block Grant, which local communities use to help low-income families get on their feet, such as funding child care, job training, and nutrition. The bill rejects this cut – instead providing \$660 million. The President’s budget also proposes cutting Low-Income Home Energy Assistance (LIHEAP) by \$379 million. The bill rejects this cut – instead providing an increase of \$501 million over 2007, enabling 1.3 million more families to receive LIHEAP assistance than in 2007.

“I believe our nation is strongest and most secure when we invest in education, economic development and healthcare for all,” stated Joe. “That is why I am supported this bill which puts our children and families first.”

Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "Deep Blue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever elected to the U.S. Congress.